



OKLAHOMA NATIONAL GUARD
JOINT FORCE HEADQUARTERS
3501 MILITARY CIRCLE
OKLAHOMA CITY OK 73111-4398
(405) 228-5000 OR DSN 628-5000

OKJ1-ESO

12 January 2009

MEMORANDUM FOR ALL SOLDIERS APPLYING FOR FEDERAL TUITION ASSISTANCE (FTA)

SUBJECT: Policies Governing the Approval Priority of Federal Tuition Assistance for FY09

1. Reference: Army National Guard Federal Tuition Assistance Policy # 08-04, dated 12 May 2008.
2. Federal Tuition Assistance (FTA) is a benefit (not entitlement) program established to support a Soldier's pursuit of their educational goals. It is designed for off-duty, voluntary training or education.
3. The National Guard Bureau (NGB) issues the policy for this program annually. The Education Services Office (ESO) for the Oklahoma Army National Guard (OKARNG) receives an Annual Funding Program (AFP) to assist enlisted and officer personnel with their postsecondary education costs. Funding for this program is limited and therefore is awarded on a first-come-first-served basis with no guarantee that all Soldiers will be approved to receive any FTA monies during a given fiscal year. The Education Services Officer has the responsibility to prioritize the use of FTA funds.
4. Currently, the OKARNG ESO has only been authorized and allotted about half the amount that was spent in last fiscal year's budget and is being advised that NGB does not expect additional funds to be allocated to the program for the rest of FY09 because of funding constraints at the national level. Given that the current budget is expected to be exhausted over the next few months, effective the date of this memorandum the ESO will process or deny applications based on priority of request. IAW NGB Policy, priorities during times of limited funding are:
 - a. Officers without a bachelor's degree.
 - b. Enlisted without a high school diploma.
 - c. Warrant officers without an Associate degree.
 - d. Enlisted without an Associate degree.
 - e. Officers without a Graduate degree.
 - f. Soldiers obtaining teacher certification.
 - g. Warrant officers without a Bachelor's degree.
 - h. Enlisted without a Bachelor's degree.

The ESO has the authority to limit or disapprove programs of study that may have limited value to the Soldier's professional development, even if the programs are accredited. Examples are programs in massage therapy, civilian pilot training, cosmetology, and welding.

OKJQ-ESO

SUBJECT: Policies Governing the Approval Priority of Federal Tuition Assistance for FY09

5. Requirements for submitting a request for Federal Tuition Assistance (FTA).

a. A properly completed and submitted electronic application through virtualarmory.com (Education tab, Online-application) by individual Soldiers utilizing their AKO username and password. Applications cannot be originated by the ESO, and paper copies of hand-filled DA 2171 are not authorized.

b. Submission to ESO of a degree plan that lists all requirements for the soldier's educational objective. Soldiers are required to notify ESO of any changes to degree plan. Soldiers may pursue only one degree or diploma at a time.

c. Submission to ESO of a course schedule and bursar's statement or other evidence, showing the itemized cost of the course to the student, i.e. tuition, fees, etc. FTA is not authorized to pay for books, parking fees, late fees, or other non-refundable fees. FTA is not authorized for duplicate or lower level degrees, regardless of whether the first degree was funded by FTA or not.

6. Submission of grades. It is the Soldier's responsibility to provide a grade report or transcript to the ESO within 30 days of completion of courses paid for with FTA. Soldiers who have not submitted grades for previous courses taken using FTA will not be approved for further FTA.

7. Timely submission of requests. FTA requests will not be approved if not received prior to the start date of the course.

8. Mobilized Soldiers or Active Guard Reserve (AGR) are not authorized to use FTA offered through the ARNG. Soldiers in this status must apply for tuition assistance through an active duty Army Education Center or through the goarmyed.com web-based portal.

9. Soldiers attending State Funded Schools in which assistance through the Oklahoma National Guard State Tuition Waiver Program (STW) is accepted will not be authorized FTA for fees unless the AFP for FY09 is increased, and all other priorities of pending applications have been met.

10. Point of contact is WO1 Tommy D. Austin, Education Services Officer (Acting) at 405-228-5251 or ngokeducation_incentives@ng.army.mil.

FOR THE ADJUTANT GENERAL:


GAIL A. LUSTY
COL, GS, OKARNG
Director of Personnel/J1